

Committee amendments pending, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Landis, please, on the committee amendments.

SENATOR LANDIS: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, LB 439, as introduced by Senators Withem and Chizek, is a method for voter registration by mail. The committee heard the bill on March 1. Among the proponents were Senator Withem, representatives of the Lancaster County Election Commissioner, Douglas County Election Commissioner, the Teamsters Union, AFL-CIO, the League of Women Voters, the Nebraska State Electoral Council and Omaha Building Trades, the Mexican-American Commission, the Nebraska State Student Association, the Nebraska Coalition for Women and the Douglas County Election Commissioner. Currently a person can only register to vote by personally applying at an office and filling out a card with the Election Commissioner or the County Clerk. This bill provides for registration by mail form. The form asks for the applicant's name, address, date of birth, citizenship, party affiliation, place of birth and previous address and the form has to be signed by the applicant and two witnesses. These forms would be available through the County Clerk or the Election Commissioner and may be distributed by any elector from the same county as the applicant. The form must be mailed at least 20 days prior to an election for that applicant to be able to vote in the election. I understand that Senator Smith offers to change that to 30 days in an amendment to be taken up later. Once the County Clerk or Election Commissioner has received the application, he or she must send a nonforwardable first-class mail certificate of registration to the applicant and if the certificate is not deliverable, a second mailing is attempted. The application is not considered registered until the certificate is received. The applicant will be notified if the application is rejected and why the application has been rejected. If the applicant's residence address is different from his or her mailing address, the applicant may designate a postal address for registration purposes. The election official may also request a signature card if necessary from an individual registering by mail. He will be able to use the signature card against the person who comes in to vote to check whether the signatures are the same. A few amendments were provided and these were generally agreed upon by election officials. First, it provides for a person to